

# Toilet School

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**For children age 4-7 who are not yet toilet trained for bowel movements, and their parents and caregivers**

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**To be held in Rutland, VT and Burlington, VT  
In six weekly group sessions, 2 hours per week**

## **Program description**

When a child is four years old and not trained to have bowel movements in the toilet, it is often frustrating and worrisome for both parent and child. Many parents feel like they have failed when their child is not trained by the expected time, and they find it difficult to find helpful support so they can guide their child to success. Toilet School is one approach to treatment that has been enormously successful. Nearly 200 children, both those developing typically and those with developmental delay or disability, participated in Toilet School at Children's Hospital in Boston. The success rate at Children's Hospital has been about 85%. Some children with developmental delays have needed more time after the six group sessions to successfully complete the process.

### **Co-sponsored by:**

- **Vermont Department of Health Children with Special Health Needs**
- **The Continence Project, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion**
- **Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association**
- **Kids on the Move**

## **The Curriculum**



Parents and children meet at the same time in different rooms, all of the children together (usually a group of 5 or 6) and parents and or caregivers together. At the end of the session the groups come together and the children share their understanding of their assignment for the week. Each week of Toilet School focuses on a different goal:

- Week 1: Understanding the anxiety**
- Week 2: Understand the body and the causes of constipation**
- Week 3: Recognizing the messages being given by parent and child**
- Week 4: Gaining confidence from one another**
- Week 5: Reinforcing the sense of self-worth**
- Week 6: Celebrating accomplishments**

A stepwise approach to toilet teaching is used throughout the course. The group sessions support children and parents as they make progress toward this important goal.

## **Toilet School Referral Criteria**



- **Children age 4-7 who are not currently having bowel movements in the toilet**
- **Ability to actively participate in self care activities such as dressing, bathing, and feeding**
- **Tolerance for small group activities**
- **Ability to communicate basic needs**
- **Ability to understand and respond to simple directions**
- **No known history of sexual abuse**

**Participants will need:**

- **A primary Care Provider referral and release form signed**
- **A history and physical regarding bowel movements and toilet habits completed by the Toilet School consulting physician, nursing specialist or local specialist.**



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